

free newsletter

Celebrating 25 Years of Service

FLICC Evolves to Meet Information Age Challenges

This issue marks the 25th anniversary of the Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC).

FLICC was born as the Federal Library Committee (FLC) on March 11, 1965, decades after federal librarians first began citing a need for a vehicle to represent the interests and address the concerns of federal libraries. Challenges presented by the Information Age, the work of tenacious librarians, and the support of decision-makers in the Library of Congress and the Bureau of the Budget (precursor to the Office of Management and Budget) finally combined to make the Committee a reality.

FLICC has been growing ever since, and has responsibly

evolved to meet the changing needs of federal libraries and information centers. The impetus for those changes has come—and continues to come—from librarians and information specialists at the three large national libraries (the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Agricultural Library); at the two large information centers (the Defense Technical Information Center and the National Technical Information Service); at department libraries and information centers in the Washington, D.C., area; at smaller federal libraries across the United States; and at tiny post libraries around the world.

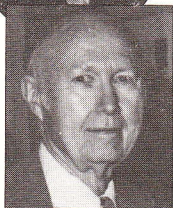
"What really has been accomplished, in practical terms, since 1965?" Mary Berghaus Levering, FLICC's acting executive director, asks. The answer, she suggests, can be found in the pages that follow,

where federal sector leaders who have helped shape FLICC tell its story.

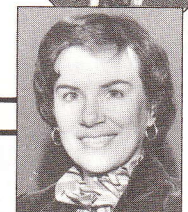
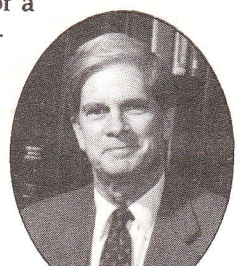
Four articles in this commemorative issue combine to give the Committee's history. The first recounts the decades of effort that brought FLC to its modest beginnings with a half-time executive secretary. The next recounts the growth and establishment of lasting features during its first decade of operation.

On page six begins the account of the mushrooming of automation—the online period. The fourth article covers the last five years and the onset of new challenges and opportunities.

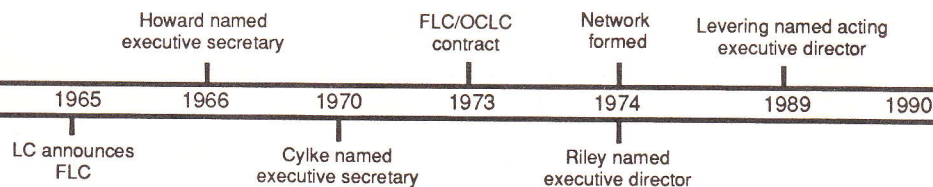
For those who have maintained the early vision of a cooperating federal information infrastructure, the best, Levering adds, is yet to come. □



L. Quincy Mumford
Paul Howard



James H. Billington
Mary Berghaus Levering



FLC's Founding Takes 70 Years of Effort

"The Library of Congress, with the cooperation of the Bureau of the Budget, has taken the initiative in establishing a Federal Library Committee to improve coordination and planning among research libraries of the Federal Government, so that common problems may be identified, solutions sought, and services to the Government and Nation improved."

—Library of Congress press release, March 11, 1965

With these words, the Federal Library Committee (FLC) officially came into existence 25 years ago. It did not happen overnight. Librarians had been trying to unite the federal library community since the nineteenth century, but only in 1965 did a librarian with persistence and political savvy and the support of his allies succeed in making it happen.

"In 1949, I found there was no information at all about federal libraries. No one could say how many there were, what they contained, or even what services they offered."

—Paul Howard

A long gestation: The movement began in 1896, when Melvil Dewey, secretary of the University of the State of New York, urged a congressional committee to create "a board of the

most eminent citizens of the country" to oversee government libraries and their collections. Congress did not act on the suggestion.

In the 1930s, the American Library Association (ALA) and the District of Columbia Library Association (DCLA) made separate unsuccessful attempts to establish a council to lead federal libraries and represent their interests. In spite of such failures, the idea did not fade; as one planning group disbanded, another was formed.

"The effort [to set up a committee] persisted for such a long time because it was simply a good, sound idea," John Lorenz, who was the Deputy Librarian of Congress in 1965, now retired, said recently. "Librarians realized cooperation and coordination were necessary to get anything accomplished."

In the 1940s, federal librarians began meeting informally to address such concerns as classification standards for library employment and duplication in library collections. There was consensus that the Librarian of Congress should establish a federal library council.

One librarian's crusade: At this time, Paul Howard, the Department of the Interior's new librarian, was attempting to consolidate the department's bureau libraries into a coherent network. He looked in vain for public sector models.

"In 1949, I found there was no information at all about federal libraries," Howard, now retired, said in a recent interview at his home in Chevy Chase, Maryland. "No one could say how many there were, what they con-

The FLICC Newsletter is published by the Federal Library and Information Center Committee. Suggestions of areas for Federal Library and Information Center Committee attention or items appropriate for inclusion in the FLICC Newsletter should be sent to:

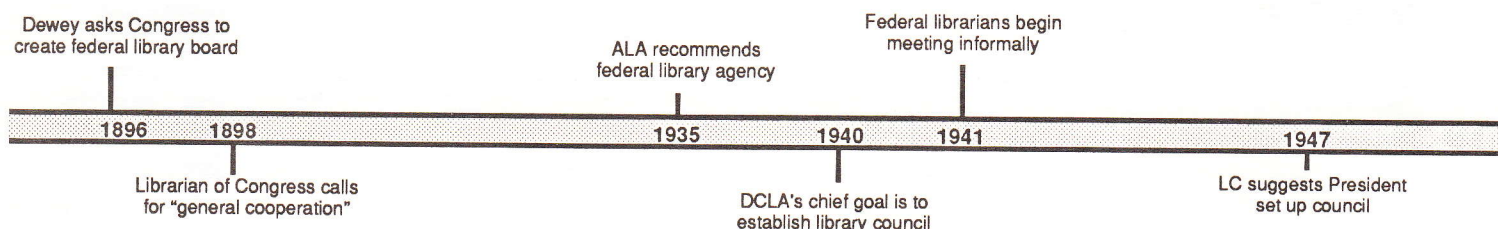
FLICC Newsletter
Federal Library and Information Center Committee
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20540
Phone: (202) 707-6055 Fax: (202) 707-2171

ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mary Berghaus Levering

This special 25th anniversary issue was produced over several months by a team that included: Christina Zirps and Dee Dolan, editors; Melissa Becher, Rich Cernak, and Christopher Krentz, writers; and Carolyn Mulford, editorial consultant. Thanks are extended to the many members of the federal library and information center community who cooperated in this production. Their contributions made the telling of this story possible.

The Federal Library and Information Center Committee was established in 1965 (as the Federal Library Committee) by the Library of Congress and the Bureau of the Budget for the purpose of concentrating the intellectual resources present in the federal library and library related information community. Its goals are:

- To achieve better utilization of library and information center resources and facilities.
- To provide more effective planning, development, and operation of federal libraries and information centers.
- To promote an optimum exchange of experience, skill, and resources.
- To promote more effective service to the Nation at large.
- To foster relevant educational opportunities.



tained, or even what services they offered."

Howard embarked on a crusade to establish a coordinating office for federal libraries. He began a series of proposals and negotiations that, after several years, not only convinced Librarian of Congress L. Quincy Mumford that a study of federal libraries was needed, but also located the monies to support it. At Howard's urging, Verner Clapp, a former Deputy Librarian of Congress who was then president of the Council of Li-



Provided funding: Verner Clapp

brary Resources (CLR), agreed to fund the survey.

"Paul Howard was good at wearing two hats," said Mary Huffer, who in 1965 was acting director of the Smithsonian Institution libraries. "He was both a politician and a librarian, and very effective at getting things done."

Brookings study in 1960s: Luther Evans, former Librarian of Congress, undertook a federal library survey sponsored by the Brookings Institution. With the assistance of Ralph Dunbar and Frank Schick, both of the Office of Education, and of Brookings' Harold Orlins, in 1963 Evans produced a report recommending the im-

mediate establishment of a group to "improve the operations of federal libraries." Members' role would be "investigatory and advisory ... to inform but not compel."

The report suggested that the Bureau of the Budget assist the Library of Congress in the initiative and act as a link to other agencies in the executive branch.

Not all librarians were pleased. "There was a good deal of resistance from federal librarians who felt the Library of Congress was taking over," Howard recalled. "We had to struggle through the whole process."

But the effort once started could not be stopped. Clapp, an early proponent of library automation, indicated CLR could provide initial funding for the Committee. Planning activities shifted into high gear.

"Verner's money made the difference," Howard said. "It was the reason FLC was established in 1965."

Final planning: Working with Ruth Fine and Lee Westrate of the Bureau of the Budget, Howard and other librarians planned the new Committee's structure. Chaired by the Librarian of Congress, it would include the heads of the National Agricultural Library and National Library of Medicine and representatives of major executive departments. Task forces would address specialized library concerns such as acquisitions, automation, and personnel.

First executive secretary: On March 11, 1965, the Library announced the Federal Library Committee's birth.



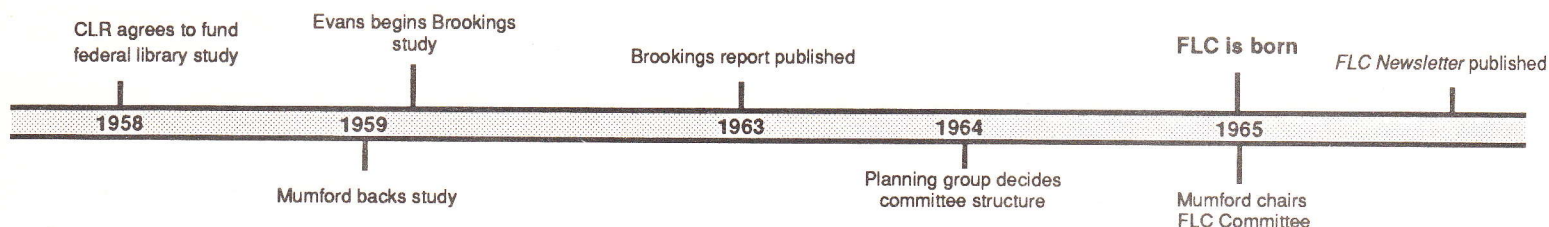
The Founding Father: Paul and Helen Howard, sign an FLC guestbook in 1974.

Shortly thereafter, Mumford wrote to Interior asking that the department detail Howard to be FLC's first executive secretary. "Paul Howard's intense interest in finding new ways to help federal libraries extend their usefulness make him an obvious first choice for this important assignment," he wrote.

Interior agreed to lend Howard temporarily. FLC was underway.

"Paul Howard took something implicit and unorganized, and was able to create a very powerful force," Huffer said. "The Committee gave librarians visibility and direction, and the chance to benefit each other."

Said Howard: "If I hadn't been there, someone else would have been." □



FLC Takes on Issues, Broadens Base

"The first decade was a very exciting period," said John Lorenz, then the Deputy Librarian of Congress. "In 1965, we were just beginning to edge toward automation, and it was hard to grasp the tremendous nature of the revolution."

The new Committee acknowledged the importance of automation for libraries, yet only gradually turned its attention to computer technology. An early list of proposed studies puts such topics as organization and management, personnel, storage of little used materials, and cataloging ahead of automation. In ten years, automation would head the list.

Getting started: With the Council of Library Resources (CLR) supporting its modest budget of \$32,550, FLC began operations with Paul Howard as executive secretary and June Newell as his secretary.

How FEDLINK Got Its Name

Credit for devising the name FEDLINK goes to Mary Huffer, then head librarian at the Department of the Interior. Chair of FLC and FEDLINK executive advisory committees in the late 1970s, Huffer entered the winning name in an EAC contest.



Howard today

The Struggle for Status

In the late 1960s, Paul Howard had one of his most satisfying experiences as executive secretary. "When the new classification standards came out, a librarian in a Knoxville, Tennessee, Army command library was demoted from a GS-13 to 11," he said. "And because it was the Army, she couldn't appeal."

Always concerned with the status of federal librarians, Howard contacted the Civil Service Commission, setting off a round of negotiations that led to the woman—and all other Army command librarians—achieving GS-13 status.

"I never met her," Howard said. "She and other federal librarians probably never knew what I had done."

Howard remained head librarian at the Department of the Interior. "I would arrive at Interior at 7 a.m., go to the Library of Congress at 9 a.m., and then return to Interior for the afternoon," Howard said. "After a few months, I told [Librarian of Congress L. Quincy] Mumford that I couldn't keep on."

Ambitious first steps: In December 1965, Howard finally became full-time executive secretary and took on several ambitious projects, including a mission statement for federal libraries, a report on the status and outlook for federal libraries, and development of a recruiting system and classification standards for federal librarians.

At the same time, FLC task forces led cooperative projects in acquisitions,

procurement, library statistics—and automation.

"We knew the potential of automation to some extent," Howard said in retrospect. "Librarians just did not fully trust it."

Vote of confidence: When CLR's funding ended after three years, Mumford persuaded Congress to fund the Committee under the Office of the Librarian of Congress. "Quincy's support established the fact that FLC was here to stay," said Lorenz.

Satisfied that his long-held vision was a reality, Howard retired in 1970.

EAC, automation and education: When Frank Kurt Cylke arrived from the Office of Education's Library Research Branch to become FLC's sec-

Full Committee meets for first time

CLR grants three-year funding

FLC publishes report on federal libraries

1965

1966

1967

Howard begins as temporary executive secretary

Howard becomes full time executive secretary

FLC writes *Federal Library Mission* statement

ond executive secretary, he sought to broaden the organization's base and assure input from every sector. He created the Executive Advisory Committee (EAC) to serve as FLC's governing body.

"The EAC was the focal point that catapulted the federal library community into automation," recalled Cylke. Charged with making policy recommendations for FLC, the EAC, made up of library managers from an array of departments and agencies, met for the first time in May 1970.

"Automation was the big issue at the time," Cylke said, yet few libraries were involved with it. Building on the automation task force Howard had established, Cylke helped create the *Committee of Eight*. Led by such prominent librarians as Russell Shank and Mary Huffer (Smithsonian), Samuel Watters (National Agricultural Library), Madeline Henderson (Bureau of Standards), and Stanley Bougas (Department of Commerce), the group educated librarians about automation—and laid the groundwork for FEDLINK.

Cylke also created the Education Committee. Headed by Bougas, it sponsored a series of seminars around the country to identify the topics that most concerned librarians. It turned out to be "automation."

Cylke remembers that at the first seminar, librarians discussed the challenges and possibilities of automation in a tiny old stone house in Quincy, Massachusetts, with very little electricity to light their way.

The birth of a network: In 1973, Cylke left FLC to take his present position, director of the Library of Congress' Division of the Blind and Physically Handicapped, now called the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. On his last day at FLC, Cylke signed a contract with the Ohio College Library Center (OCLC), Columbus, to bring in dial access to the OCLC system. When the dedicated lease line was ready in 1974, seven federal libraries went online.

"Automation was the most impor-

"The EAC was the focal point that catapulted the federal library community into automation."

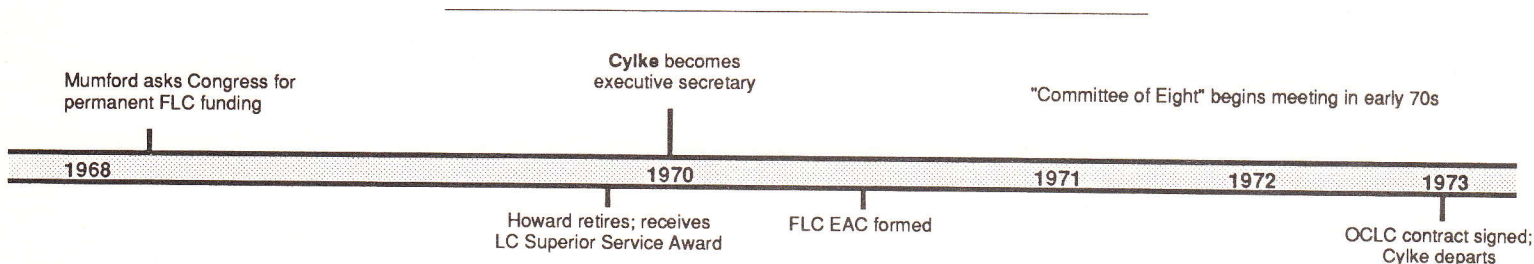
Frank Kurt Cylke

tant area at that time, and it still is," Cylke said recently.

Lorenz agreed. "It is a good thing FLC happened when it did," he said. "If libraries had not had that coordination and leadership in place, automation might have overcome them." □



Early EAC: FLC executive secretary Kurt Cylke poses (from left) with: Marlene Morrissey, LC, Librarian of Congress L. Quincy Mumford, Erik Bromberg, Interior, John Sherrod, NAL, Robert Severance, Maxwell Air Force Base, Elsa Freeman, Housing and Urban Development, and Stanley Bougas, Commerce.



FLC/FEDLINK Emerges as Nation's Largest

"As a librarian, I was trained to help people; it was great to be in a position to help librarians," says James P. Riley in looking back on his 14 years as executive director of the Federal Library Committee (FLC) and, with reorganization in 1984, the Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC).

"Never has anyone as a manager been given more role models," remembers Lucinda Leonard, FEDLINK network coordinator in 1978-82.

"We were rushing along like a runner across a bed of hot coals," recalls Milton McGee, network coordinator since 1982. "The point was not to stay in one place too long and to get across as fast as you could. In other words, do the most essential things."

Leadership and innovation produced remarkable growth during

FLC's second decade, when FEDLINK emerged as the nation's largest library network.

Riley had become executive director in January 1974, after heading the Marquette University Library, Milwaukee, and working in several other university and federal libraries.

The first OCLC contract: Awaiting his attention was a 1973 contract between FLC and the Ohio College Library Center (OCLC) to experiment with online cataloging.

It was decided to form a federal library network whose members would cooperate to reduce costs and enhance service by contracting, through the FLC, for the services of OCLC, which had a database catalog of 1.4 million titles.

The network provided hands-on experience in shared cataloging and use of an online computerized system to assist in cataloging and other technical processing.

Dial-up access: The month Riley arrived, a dedicated lease line was completed from OCLC, Columbus, Ohio, to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. The circuit branched to the members, and seven libraries in Washington, D.C. went online. In July, dial-up access al-

lowed federal libraries in the field to use the OCLC system as well.

Major benefits drew libraries into the system. Riley said recently, "It was beneficial for resource sharing among libraries with the same interests."

"We were rushing along like a runner across a bed of hot coals."

—Milton McGee

Firstly, a library was actually able to use another library's catalog. Then, a library would know where to find a resource it might not have, and this allowed the library to limit its purchases."

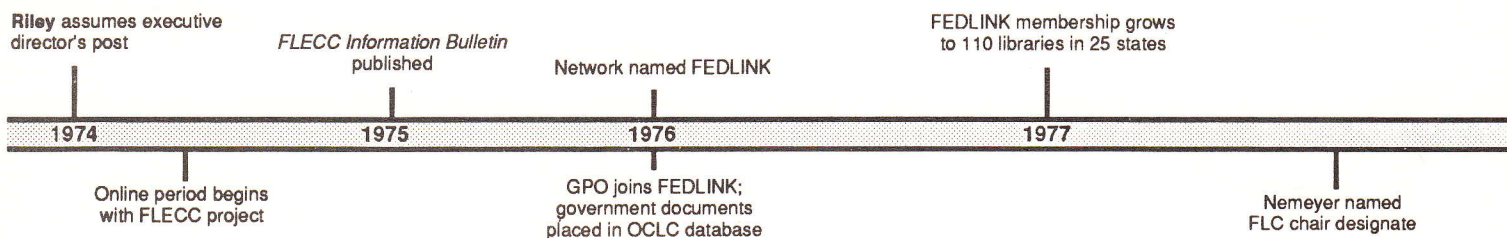
Growing pains: The project experienced some problems initially. "Twice I had to argue for continuation of the contract," Riley says. "After two years, OCLC was not making any money. But, through our efforts and those of Larry Learn, then director of OCLC's Computer Facilities Division, we got them to try it for a few more years."

The network experienced explosive growth, from 110 libraries involved by 1977 to 500 by 1983—ten years after the cooperative effort began, and the year before FLC was reorganized to include information centers and renamed the Federal Library and Information Center Committee.

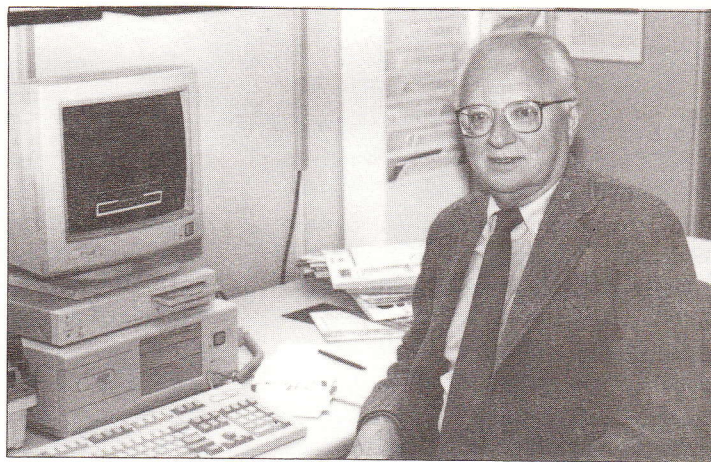
As the network grew, it also changed names, from the original FEDNET to Federal Libraries Experiment in Cooperative Cataloging



New network coordinator: Lucinda Leonard (center) relinquishes her post to Milton McGee (right) as David Brunell, James P. Riley, and FEDLINK EAC chair Thomas Russell look on.



Library Network



Automation was the key: Riley, FLC's third executive director, focused on automating the federal sector.

(FLECC) in 1974 to FLC/OCLC in 1975 to FEDLINK in 1976. Highlights of the period, McGee says, included contracting with online vendors such as the Bibliographical Center for Research and Dialog.

"When the General Services Administration gave us a delegation of procurement authority, they were aware that non-libraries and other agencies would come to us," he explains. "They began to route to us both libraries and non-libraries."

Small staff, big challenges: FLC's small staff took on numerous challenges, says McGee. "We were introducing most libraries to OCLC, and they were beginning to buy their own tapes. Automation was just getting off the ground, and we were involved in it—for example the OCLC interlibrary loan subsystem. A lot of libraries re-

quired a good bit of training, and there were a lot of user group meetings dealing with basics."

Riley credits a "nucleus of network librarians" for the success of the rapidly de-

veloping programs, noting the FEDLINK staff displayed both technical expertise and "sensitivity to the many variations of people's needs."

McGee remembers "madly rushing around" introducing changes. "We were the first people to broker services in this area, and it was a chance for many people to learn various skills." He points to staff members Joseph Ford, who now operates Joseph

Ford Associates in Olympia, Washington, and David Brunell, now executive director of the Bibliographic Center for Research in Denver, as innovators and "upstanding librarians, technologically ahead of their times."

Leonard says, "Jim Riley was the most savvy person that I have ever met," and he put together an "exceptional staff," including McGee and Lee Power, FLICC's chief program analyst. "Teaching was really exciting and Milt McGee, Joe Ford, and Dave Brunell really had the followings," says Leonard,

referring to early automation training classes they taught. "It was guru time. It was fun."

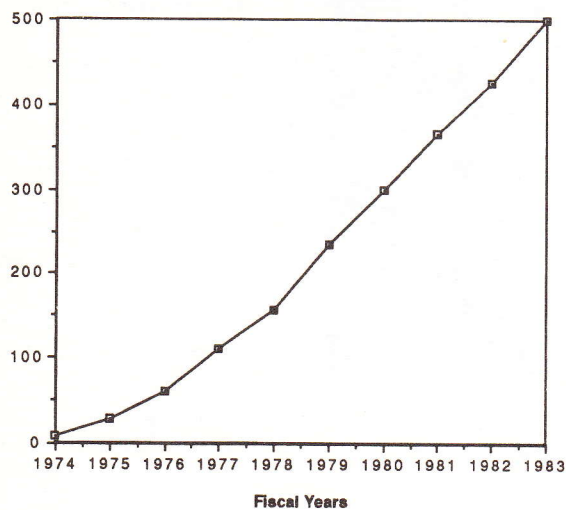
FLC and its network component provided retrieval services, tape processing, and acquisition support and spearheaded federal library participation in the first White House Conference on Library and Information Services (WHCLIS) in 1979.

"It was an early innovative time without blueprints," says McGee. The network changed its emphasis from the introduction of technology to procurement, which in time overtook the technical side of the business. The focus from now on would be on fiscal management.

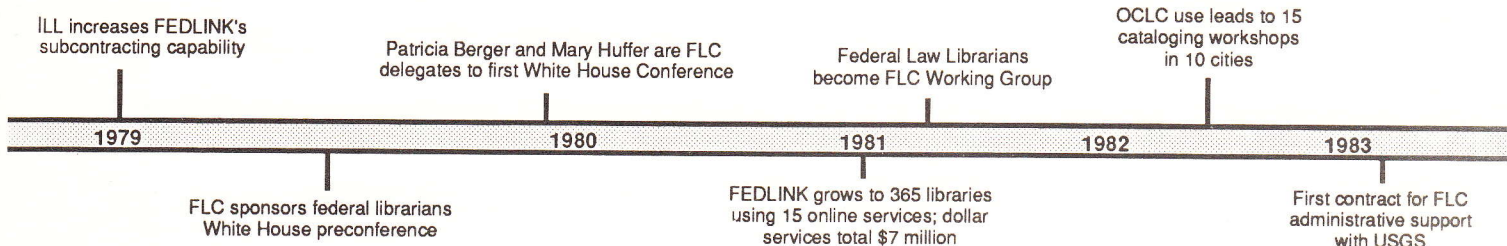
The need for more cooperation through networking and improved services to the government and the nation-at-large was sounded again in the early 1980s under the leadership of Dr. Carol A. Nemeyer, FLICC chair designate and associate librarian for National Programs, Library of Congress (LC). LC, FLC, and the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) collaborated on a study, *Toward a Federal Library and*

(See FEDLINK, p. 8, col. 1)

FEDLINK's Early Growth: 1974-83
Libraries Participating in the FEDLINK Network



Source: FLC annual reports



FEDLINK, from p. 6

Information Services Network: A Proposal. Published in 1982, the study was conducted by Alphonse F. Trezza, then director of the Intergovernmental Library Cooperation Project, and funded by NCLIS with full administrative support from LC.

Managing growth: After the initial period of expansion, says Riley, "it became a matter of effectively managing growth. We rode through that period expanding OCLC and information retrieval. By 1984, we were offering as many as 30 services." Interagency agreements grew from 613 in 1981 to 3,560 by 1988, while service dollars climbed from \$7 million in FY 1981 to \$91.4 million in FY 1988.

FEDLINK has established itself as a

network organization of cooperating libraries and information centers that today offers any federal agency the opportunity to enhance its information resources through cost-effective access to a number of information and operations support services, including online reference databases from the major vendors, online cataloging, interlibrary loan, acquisitions, serials control from bibliographic utilities, and book and serial subscription ordering services.

By FY 1990, 1,427 agency libraries, information centers, and federal offices were cooperating in the use of 81 contractual services for more than \$80 million of service.

Educational resource: During this period, FLICC/FEDLINK became a resource for education and training

for the federal information community. By 1990, FEDLINK network librarians were teaching more than 100 classes each year, equipping federal professionals across the country with practical knowledge needed to handle changing information requirements.

At the same time, the FLICC Education Working group, chaired by Ed Liszewski, U.S. Geological Survey Library System, was organizing a wide-ranging series of educational seminars, topped by the annual FLICC forum on federal information policies. Through these ongoing seminars, current and often controversial issues are aired by policy specialists from both national and local arenas.

For Riley, who retired from the federal government in 1989, the lasting accomplishment of his tenure was

"the level of professional librarianship that was reached and maintained and how it grew as part of a national network. That was unique then, and it is unique now."

Riley says this accomplishment could best be seen at the regional level. "No matter what my business when I was on a trip, I would always stop at a federal library. I would get euphoric when I would go out and talk to library personnel and see how much they had grown. You could see what the program had done for them and how they were growing. That increased professionalism exists even more so today." □



A new home: FLC/FEDLINK staff take a break from moving into the Library of Congress Adams Building in 1981. From left, back row: Bruce Miller, network librarian, Brunell, Ford, and fiscal staffers Patricia Thompson, Patricia Dillon, and Susan Slator. Middle Row: McGee, Michele Coleman, work study, and Barbara Smith, receptionist. Front row: Leonard and FEDLINK staffers Shirley Thompson and Theresa Young.

Toward a Federal Library and Information Services Network: A Proposal published.

Microcomputer Center opens for demonstration of equipment and software

FLC name changes to FLICC

1983

1984

FEDLINK Technical Notes is launched

First FLC Forum on Federal Information Policies

Education Working Group reactivated

FLICC Responds to Shifting Priorities

"It was a little bit like magic," says Gail Kohlhorst, General Services Administration and FEDLINK Executive Advisory Council (EAC) chair. "I would call up, I would fill out my forms, and things would be taken care of. There was not much of a struggle on my part to worry about the relationship between FLICC and FEDLINK, or between FLICC and the Library of Congress. ... In recent years, the need to participate on behalf of the members has increased."

Her words regarding the use of FEDLINK procurement reflect the palpable changes that have taken place during FLICC's last five years, especially since the appointment of James Billington as Librarian of Congress in the summer of 1987. From a period of tremendous expansion of services and income, FLICC/FEDLINK has moved into a period of reevaluating its priorities, mission, and services.

Tail wagging the dog: By the mid-1980s, FEDLINK's enormous growth prompted many members to refer to it as "the tail wagging the dog." Its relationship to FLICC became increasingly obscured.

"There were individuals who saw FLICC and FEDLINK as two separate organizations," says Mary "Mac" Bonnett, Army Materiel Command, and 1989 FEDLINK EAC chair. "That was a misinterpretation because without FLICC, FEDLINK could not exist."

Because FLICC's authority as an advising committee derives basically from the Library of Congress (LC), as

announced in the 1965 press release issued by LC, and notices in the *Federal Register*, the relationship has not been clearly articulated.

First Bylaws: The need to resolve the confusion surrounding the missions of FLICC and FEDLINK led to the formation of the FLICC Membership and Governance Working Group in 1987 by Ruth Ann Stewart, then FLICC chair designate and assistant librarian for National Programs, LC. This group, now chaired by Dorothy Cross, Pentagon Library, worked diligently to draft the Committee's first *Bylaws*. Expected to come to a vote at an upcoming FLICC Quarterly Membership Meeting, these *Bylaws* will clearly define the organizational structure of FLICC, including the network's status as the "first among equals" of its working

groups. The *Bylaws* will also serve as a companion document to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), providing details on the structure and governance of FLICC.

(See CHALLENGES, p. 10, col. 1)

The Federal Library and Information Center Community

Purpose: Federal libraries and information centers support the missions and nourish the programs of the agencies they represent, providing those agencies as well as citizens within and without the federal government with access to information when and where it is needed.

Spectrum: More than 2,500 federal libraries and information centers are located in all branches of the federal government and other independent agencies, comprising a global information infrastructure that reaches from Washington, D.C. to Alaska and from Panama to Saudi Arabia.

Components:

- Cornerstones of the federal library and information infrastructure are: the three large national libraries, the Library of Congress, the National Agricultural Library, the National Library of Medicine; and two information centers, the National Technical Information Service and the Defense Technical Information Center; plus

- Hundreds of other federal libraries and information centers, ranging from the very large, some with collections devoted to a single subject, such as the U.S. Department of Education Research Library, to the very small (sometimes only one employee), such as those that serve military posts around the world; as well as

- Mininetworks, including numerous field office libraries of agencies like the Department of Defense, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, which form networks of their own.

Gary Ridgell joins staff;
introduces FLAIR

Stewart named
FLICC chair designate

FLICC begins personnel study of
federal information professionals

1985

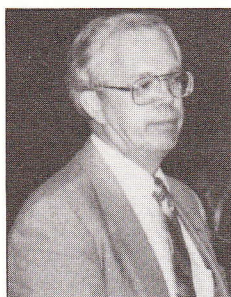
1986

FEDLINK adds serial
subscription services

FEDLINK/OCLC Europe provide
service to military libraries overseas.

Fall 1990

Specific statutory authority: In 1986, the *Donohue Report*, an in-depth study of FLICC and federal libraries conducted by Dr. Joseph Donohue, then consultant for Information Services of Santa Barbara, California, stated that FLICC "needs a congressional mandate as an oversight agency, along with stable and substantial appropriations." Since then, efforts have been ongoing to develop legislation granting FLICC and its network component specific statutory authority.



Kurt Molholm

The FLICC Policy Working Group, established by Kent Smith, deputy director, National Library of Medicine, and currently chaired by Kurt Molholm, Defense Technical Information Center, drafted the legislation in late 1989 and early 1990. After consideration by the LC staff and the FLICC EAC, it was decided to accomplish the objective through a MOA. If agreed upon, the MOA would be signed by the Librarian of Congress and appropriate agencies in the executive and judicial branches.

Molholm says that the MOA not only will "make FLICC legal" by documenting the services it already provides to federal libraries and information centers, but also will launch a proactive research and development (R&D) effort. FLICC will be able to find out what the community may

need and then do some R&D to anticipate problems, he says, as opposed to only responding when an organiza-

FLICC will be able to ... do some R&D to anticipate problems as opposed to only responding when an organization within the community asks for help.

—Kurt Molholm

tion within the community asks for help.

Separate legislation is being considered by LC to provide for a revolving fund, so that FEDLINK members could deposit money in an account and replenish funds as they are used.

Shifting priorities: FLICC members also recognized in the mid-1980s that day-to-day operations, while very important, left no time to devote to long-term policy concerns. Reports show federal information professionals under stress due to a variety of factors, including inadequate personnel classification standards, budget cuts, and forced contracting out of services, and even of entire libraries, under the Office of Management and Budget's Circular A-76.

Molholm says the recent formation, or reactivation, of such FLICC working groups as those on policy, personnel, and binding indicates the growing concerns of federal librarians.

Other working groups: Major efforts have been made in recent years by the FLICC Personnel Working Group, chaired by Louise Nyce, Army Materiel Command, working with an independent classification consultant and FLICC EAC member Elisabeth

Knauff, Department of Treasury, to review and revise the librarian and library technician classification and qualification standards.

The FLICC Binding Working Group, reestablished in 1989, and chaired by Mary Bob Vick, Pentagon Library, has worked to address quality and contractual concerns regarding the Government Printing Office's (GPO's) federal binding program.

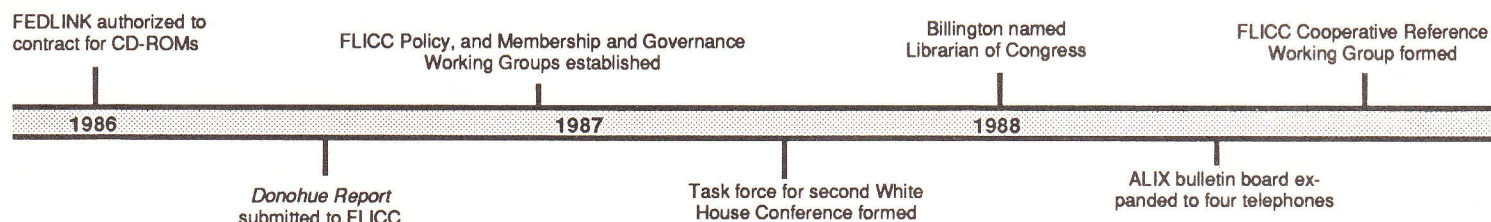
The Federal Law Librarians Working Group maintains affiliations as both a FLICC working group and a section of the Law Librarians for the District of Columbia (LLSDC). This group reduces costs for Washington metropolitan area federal law libraries by exchanging duplicates of law journals and coordinating interlibrary loans with non-federal law library services.



Gail Kohlhorst

A group of 15 reference librarians from almost as many federal libraries and information centers met at the Library of Congress on August 4, 1988 and voted to come under the aegis of FLICC as the Cooperative Reference Working Group. The group, which has grown to about 40 members, chaired by Victoria Hill, LC, meets to exchange information about available services and collections and to explore the potential for increased cooperation and shared services.

Expanded communication and fiscal services: Late in 1984, the staff—then composed of the executive director, a secretary, a program analyst, the



FEDLINK coordinator, and nine network librarians and fiscal personnel—had to be expanded.

Christina Zirps joined the staff as assistant to the executive director and administrative officer in October 1984. Zirps set up a Publications/Education office, establishing one of the first desktop publishing programs at LC and providing administrative support for FLICC's extensive educational programs.

In March 1985, Gary Ridgell became assistant FEDLINK coordinator, taking over the fiscal operations and automating accounting and other financial functions with microcomputers. The FEDLINK fiscal staff grew to 17, with 10 new positions added in FY 1989 alone. Ridgell and Jeanette Leach, fiscal systems analyst, were instrumental in designing the microcomputer-based fiscal system, FEDLINK Accounting Information Retrieval (FLAIR).

A national voice: FLICC has become increasingly active in federal information policy, which, Molholm explains, "has more and more been recognized as a national concern, as a resource that has value."

Playing its policy role, FLICC has embarked on an expanded program of educational events, the foremost being the annual FLICC Forum on Federal Information Policies. Mary Berghaus Levering, FLICC's acting executive director since March 1989, organized the first forum in 1984 when she was chief, Network Divi-



Mac Bonnett

sion, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

A current FLICC priority is preparing for the second White House Conference on Library and Information Services in 1991. FLICC will be represented by four voting delegates and four alternates.

Stocktaking: Having begun to reevaluate FLICC and FEDLINK, the members were forced to take a detailed look at the network's operations in January 1989, when an audit by Library of Congress Inspector General John Rensbarger revealed that a few agencies had used FEDLINK's procurement program to obtain services that may have been inappropriate.

While the resulting moratorium on certain contracts and four types of FEDLINK library services created difficulties for many agencies and led to a delay in the FY 1990 contracting process, some members say that the investigation has left a much stronger base on which to build better service.

"From now on there will be a lot of documentation on the program," says Kohlhorst. "People will understand why things were done

in whatever fashion we chose to do them."

She adds that Levering can be proud of her accomplishments. "She came in under trying circumstances, but has opened up the lines of communication and has been willing to share everything with us," Kohlhorst says. "This was essential," she notes, "in helping members to cope with the many program changes that were required during the last two years. Without the increased communication, we would have an even more difficult time explaining to FEDLINK members and participants what is really happening."

(See CHALLENGES, p. 12, col. 1)

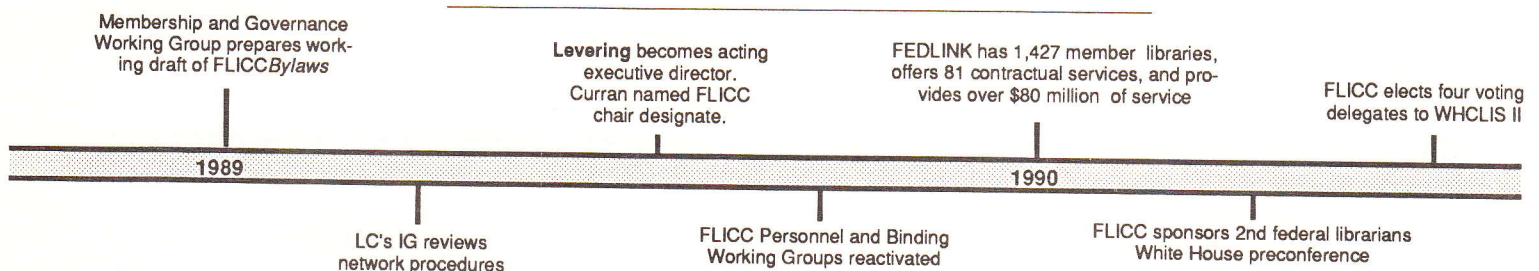
FLICC Executive Advisory Committee

1989-1990

- **Chair Designate:** Donald C. Curran, Acting Associate Librarian for Constituent Services, Library of Congress
- Elizabeth Buffum, Department of Energy
- James Byrn, Army TRALINET
- Lois Ann Colaianne, National Library of Medicine
- Dorothy Cross, Pentagon Library
- Elisabeth S. Knauff, Department of the Treasury
- Gail Kohlhorst, General Services Administration
- Kurt Molholm, Defense Technical Information Center
- Karen Renninger, Veterans Affairs
- Keith Russell, National Agricultural Library

FLICC Working Group Chairs

- **FEDLINK:** Gail Kohlhorst, Chair, FEDLINK Executive Advisory Council
- **Binding:** Mary Bob Vick, Pentagon
- **Cooperative Reference:** Victoria Hill, Library of Congress
- **Education:** Edward Liszewski, US Geological Survey
- **Federal Law Librarians:** Billie Grey, Department of Commerce Law Library
- **Membership and Governance:** Dorothy Cross
- **Personnel:** Louise Nyce, Army Materiel Command
- **Policy:** Kurt Molholm
- **FLAG:** Elizabeth Yeates, Nuclear Regulatory Commission



CHALLENGES, from p. 11

Back on track: Bonnett sums up the feelings of many members: "I think that after this painful year, things are getting back on track. We all understand a great deal more about the network and what it is we are actually working on."

Insuring FLICC's continued success and responsiveness to federal library and information center needs is a responsibility currently entrusted to Donald Curran, acting associate librarian for Constituent Services, LC, appointed by Dr. Billington in the fall of 1989 as chair designate for FLICC.

FLICC's agenda today closely resembles that of in 1965, only now there are many more issues to address. The organization is allocating energies and resources to education, personnel, binding, cooperative reference, automation, and other concerns facing federal libraries and information centers, as well as to federal information policies of national importance.

At the same time, FLICC maintains

the network on which so many in the community have come to depend.

While the era of documentation—which will see the writing of many of the policies, procedures, guidelines, and

even standards for what is done—has not ended, the understanding it has already engendered will serve all FLICC/FEDLINK members in good stead for the next 25 years. □

Who Belongs to FLICC?

Today the more than 2,500 federal libraries and information centers across the nation and around the world receive assistance and leadership from the Federal Library and Information Center Committee.

When founded in 1965 as the Federal Library Committee, it consisted of 18 members, including 12 permanent members (representing the Library of Congress, the National Agricultural Library, the National Library of Medicine, and each of the then executive departments) plus six rotating members (representing six independent federal agencies). Two agencies sent official observers.

The membership has increased over the years. At the time of the 1984 reor-

ganization and renaming as FLICC, permanent membership had been increased by new executive departments and 12 additional agencies. Rotating members had increased to 10, each of the military services had added non-voting members, and five agencies were authorized to send observers.

Pending expected action in 1990 on *Bylaws* designed to expand FLICC membership, most rotating members for the terms 1986-87 and 1988-89 have continued to serve on the Committee.

Thus the Committee currently consists of 30 permanent members (including the three non-voting military services) and 18 rotating members. □

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540

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